

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 05297 022100Z

64

ACTION EUR-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 5297

E.O. 11652: GDS 12/31/79

TAGS: MCAP, NATO, NL

SUBJECT: NATO SPECIALIZATION STUDY

REF: A. STATE 208639

B. USNATO 5139

C. USNATO 5147

D. STATE 213258

E. STATE 216004

SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE REPORTS UNWILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF SEVERAL NATO ALLIES TO ADDITIONAL STUDY OF SPECIALIZATION IN GROUND AND AIR SUB-GROUPS. MISSION RECOMMENDS EMPHASIS ON LOGISTICS SPECIALIZATION AND CONTINUES TO FAVOR BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH ALLIED DEFENSE MINISTERS ON SPECIALIZATION AT NPG MINISTERIAL MEETING.
END SUMMARY.

1. ON OCT 29, COL CABOLET (MILITARY COUNSELOR IN BELGIAN DELEGATION)
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PAGE 02 NATO 05297 022100Z

EXPRESSED VIEW TO MISSION'S DEPUTY DEFENSE ADVISOR
THAT FURTHER STUDY OF LAND AND AIR FORCES SPECIALIZATION IS
NOT LIKELY TO TURN UP ANY ACCEPTABLE PROPOSALS AND WOULD BE
COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE BECAUSE SOME GOVERNMENTS WOULD PROBABLY USE THE

STUDY AS PRETEXT TO POSTPONE NEEDED FORCE IMPROVEMENTS. GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO IMPROVE FORCES IF SPECIALIZATION MIGHT RESULT IN NEW FORCE MIXES. COL CABOLET ALSO POINTED OUT THAT SMALL COUNTRIES CAN NOT PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY IN SUCH A LARGE NUMBER OF STUDY GROUPS. HE RECOMMENDED THAT NATO FOCUS PRIMARY ATTENTION ON THE LOGISTICS SUB-GROUP.

2. ON OCT 29, COL HOLZFUSS (ASSIGNED TO STAFF OF FRG MILREP) RESPONDED TO OUR REQUEST FOR AN INFORMAL REACTION TO PROPOSED LAND FORCES STUDY APPROACH AND EXAMPLE (REFS A AND B). HOLZFUSS SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED MATTER WITH FRG MILREP LT GEN VON BUTLER AND WITH MOD BONN. REACTION WAS NEGATIVE: MANNING BY CADRE UNITS WOULD LOWER READINESS STATUS OF AIR DEFENSE SITES; FURTHER, GERMANS WOULD PREFER THAT CORPS UNITS ALL BE OF SAME NATIONALITY, THUS EFFECTIVELY RULING OUT SUGGESTION THAT ANTITANK UNITS OF OTHER NATIONS BE ASSIGNED TO GERMAN CORPS AS COMPENSATION. HOLZFUSS DID SAY THAT MOD BONN WAS FORMING A NATIONAL STUDY GROUP TO TRY TO FIND DESIRABLE AND FESIBLE SPECIALIZATION ALTERNATIVES.

3. IN REF C, WE REPORTED THAT MAJORITY OF AIR SUB-GROUP MEMBERS RECOMMENDED DISBANDING SUB-GROUP AND LEVAING FURTHER STUDY TO INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STAFF GROUP WORKING ON RATIONALIZATION. ATTITUDE OF MOST ALLIED DELEGATIONS IS THAT ONLY THE LOGISTICS AREA HOLDS ANY POTENTIAL FOR REALISTIC SPECIALIZATION.

4. IN VIEW OF APPARENTLY SERIOUS AND DEEP-SEATED RESERVATIONS ON THE PART OF SEVERAL ALLIED GOVERNMENTS, MISSION RECOMMENDS: A) THAT US EMPHASIZE BENEFITS TO BE DERIVED FROM LOGISTICS SPECIALIZATION; AND B) THAT US UTILIZE BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH DEFENSE MINISTERS TO REINFORCE US POSITION AT UPCOMING NPG MINISTERIAL MEETING.
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